

athlete is from Africa; that athlete's from Latin America; that athlete's from the Caribbean; that athlete's from Scandinavia; that athlete's from the Middle East. But they could all be Americans, because we are bound together not by our race but by our fidelity to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the Declaration of Independence, and our belief that we can all live here in peace and harmony and mutual respect.

So I leave you with that thought. If we meet our responsibilities to each other and to our children and to our future, our responsibilities to the world, and if we meet our fundamental responsibility to go forward together in mutual respect, then our days are going to get better and our best days are still to come. You can have an enormous influence wherever you live and whatever you do because of your service to America in uniform and because of the sacrifice of that service, if you will remind your fellow Americans of those fundamental lessons.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE. The President spoke at 1:52 p.m. at the Riverside Hilton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Thomas A. McMasters III, national commander, Disabled American Veterans; and actor Christopher Reeve.

Remarks at the Children's Television Conference

July 29, 1996

The President. Good morning. We're delighted to see all of you here for this historic meeting. A lot of you have come a long way, some of you on the red-eye, and I appreciate the efforts you've made to be here.

We're here for a clear purpose: to improve and expand educational television for our children. The ability of the United States to make the 21st century the age of greatest possibility in our Nation's history depends in no small measure on our ability to build strong families today; to help our parents to succeed not only in the workplace but in their most important job, raising good, well-educated, well-balanced, successful children.

That is why we have worked so hard to give our families more control over one of the most influential forces in our Nation, tel-

evision. As all of you know better than I, it is now a major part of our national landscape. A typical child watches 25,000 hours of television before his or her 18th birthday. Preschoolers watch 28 hours of television a week, and at least during the Olympics, so do Presidents.

We have dedicated ourselves to giving parents the power to screen out television they believe their children should not see. That's what the V-chip was all about. I was proud to sign the telecommunications law with the V-chip requirement to give parents the ability to stop programming that they think is inappropriate for their young children to see.

You in the entertainment industry have certainly been doing your part. Meeting here in the White House 5 months ago, you volunteered to rate shows for content. You came together as responsible corporate citizens to give America's families an early-warning system. Parents who use the V-chip will now be able to block objectionable shows before it's too late.

Together these initiatives constitute an invaluable arsenal for America's parents. And I'd also like to point out that this is a challenge being met in the appropriate way by people working together and coming together, not fighting and drifting apart.

But that is only half the battle. As Americans we have to define ourselves not simply by what we stand against, but more importantly by what we stand for. Now we have the opportunity to use the airwaves for something positive, educational programming as great as our kids. Television can be a strong and positive force. It can help children to learn. It can reinforce rather than undermine the values we work so hard to teach our children, showing children every day what it means to share, to respect themselves and others, to take responsibility for their actions, to have sympathy with others who have difficulties, even to recognize that "it's not easy being green."

This morning I would like to hear from you about what we can do to broaden the range of quality educational programming for children. I hope we can focus on three specific issues. First, I'd like to talk about the new research that shows how kids can learn valuable lessons from TV over the course of

their young lifetimes. Second, I'd like to find out more about what good shows look like. Third, I'd like us to talk about how we can break down the barriers to the development and production of quality educational programming for children.

Before we begin, I would like to make an announcement. For the past year I've been calling upon the Federal Communications Commission to require broadcasters to air a minimum of 3 hours of genuine educational programming a week—3 hours a week, 180 minutes a week, about 2½ percent of the entire schedule. Such a requirement would halt a steep and troubling decline.

As recently as the early eighties, the three major networks aired several hours more than that of children's educational and informational shows. But by 1990, they were down to 2 hours a week or less than 2 hours a week. The number is inching up now, but we must do more. The airwaves that broadcasters use, after all, belong to all of us. And in exchange for their use, broadcasters are required to serve the public interest. I cannot imagine anything that serves the public interest more than seeing to it that we give our children at least 3 hours of educational television a week.

That's why it gives me great pleasure to announce that the four major networks, the National Association of Broadcasters, and some of the leading advocates for educational television have come together to join me in supporting a new proposal to require broadcasters to air 3 hours of quality educational programming a week. This proposal fulfills the promise of the Children's Television Act, that television should serve the educational and informational needs of our young people. It gives broadcasters flexibility in how to meet those needs. And it says to America's parents, you are not alone; we are all committed to working with you to see that educational programming for your children makes the grade. I urge the FCC to adopt this proposal to make the 3-hour rule the law of the land. Television can build up young lives rather than tear them down.

I'd like to say a particular word of thanks to Congressman Ed Markey for his work on this issue and a very special word of appreciation to the Vice President for his tireless ef-

forts, along with Greg Simon, to bring about this agreement. I thank them very, very much. Today we can work to imagine television as a force for good, to imagine what television for children would look like if it resembled what we imagined it was when we were children or when you first got started in this business.

In recent days, as families have gathered to watch the Olympics, we have all been reminded about the good that television can bring into our homes, how it can bring us together, how it can inspire and educate us. This should be our standard. I'm anxious now to get to work.

And I'd like to invite three people to come up here for some comments of their own about the agreement that has been reached: Eddie Fritts, the president of the National Association of Broadcasters; Les Moonves, the president of CBS Entertainment; Peggy Charren, the founder of Action for Children's Television.

Peggy, Les, Eddie, would you come up.

[At this point, Mr. Fritts, Mr. Moonves, and Ms. Charren made brief remarks.]

The President. The first subject we're going to talk about is the influence of television on children. We have some good presentations here. I would like to call on the First Lady to begin.

[Hillary Clinton introduced conference participants and moderated a panel discussion on the influence of television on children.]

The President. Thank you very much. I think, to stay on schedule, we need to move to the next topic. It's clear that there's a consensus here and that the evidence supports the fact that television can be, has been, and is in many cases a positive force in children's lives. So I think we ought to discuss a little bit about what makes a successful children's television program. And I'd like to ask Mrs. Gore to lead the discussion, and I'll turn it over to her now.

[Tipper Gore introduced additional conference participants and moderated a panel discussion on how children's programming can be developed.]

Mrs. Gore. Now, Mr. President, we've finished with this particular part of the program and would like your comments.

The President. First of all, I love this. I wish we had all day to listen to you all talk about this.

We want to talk now about whether there are barriers to more and better children's programs and, if so, what they are. And I guess I would like to begin by welcoming the advertisers that are here and thanking them for their commitment to this announcement we've made today and to this cause generally. I thought what Ms. Laybourne said about being a worrier—a lot of the things she said I thought were quite on point. And I think that the role of advertisers in sort of changing the whole look of how we approach this issue could be quite critical. So I'm delighted that you're here.

And we're now going on to a section about how we should define and recognize and then deliver quality on these programs and what barriers there are and how we would go about taking them down. And so I'm going to call on the Vice President to take over the last section.

[Vice President Gore introduced additional conference participants and moderated a panel discussion on impediments to developing children's programming.]

The President. Let me thank all of you, first of all, for coming. And those of you who participated in this historic agreement, I'm very grateful to you. You have done a good thing for your country today.

I do not want to leave us on a down note, but I want to put this in the context of what I think the real stakes are of what we're discussing here. And I leave you with this thought, a challenge to think about another barrier that has nothing to do with the production of the programs or even getting advertising, which is how are you going to get these programs to the kids that need to see them the most, the kids that are most at risk in our society, and how are you going to reach their parents?

And I want to just ask you to think about these two facts. One is, while we are, at least inside our administration we are very happy that the crime rate has gone down for 4 years

in a row in America—it's a wonderful thing, 4 years in a row of a dropping crime rate—the rate of random violence among people between the ages of 12 and 17 is going up. Cocaine use has dropped by a third, but the rate of random drug use among people between the ages of 12 and 17 has been going up since 1991. Fact one.

Second thing. When school starts this fall, 51.7 million children will enroll in schools. And it's the first time since I, the oldest of the baby boomers—since the baby boomers were fully in school that there has been a class of schoolchildren bigger than the baby boom generation, which means we have a few years to turn these trends around or reap a whirlwind from it.

Basically, if you look at all the aggregate statistics in our country, it seems that most things are moving in the right direction after years of being troubled. But there are just so many of these kids out here that are either virtually raising themselves or their parents—almost all of whom, I believe, would like to do a good job—they want to do a good job, but they're not sure how they should do it. So one huge barrier here that we have not discussed because it's sort of beyond our purview, but that a lot of you who are brilliant at marketing things to people and reaching people, is how do you reach the parents?

You know, I had a pretty good education, but I learned a lot because Chelsea was into "Sesame Street" and "Where in the World Is Carmen San Diego?" When I met the co-leaders of San Marino at the Olympics, I knew where it was because Chelsea got me into "Where in the World Is"—[laughter]—not because I had a degree from the foreign service school at Georgetown. I'm just saying, how do we reach the parents? This is a serious issue.

And secondly, if you cannot reach the parents, is there some way to reach the kids anyway? We're trying to give schools more funds, for example, to open early and stay open late. Is there some way to redirect the programs in there so that—and work with the schools so that they will show the programs to the kids in the after school area. You really need to think about this because the kids that need what you're doing the most

may have barriers that we haven't even discussed today.

I want to make one last point. I think it would be very good for the adults of this country, including all of us who work in the White House, if Mr. Rogers' poem could be read once a week on primetime television.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Geraldine Laybourne, president, Disney/ABC Cable Network; and Fred Rogers, host, "Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood."

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Congressional Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters

July 29, 1996

Terrorism

The President. Good afternoon. Ladies and gentlemen, first let me thank the Members of the congressional leadership who are here to discuss this very important issue. I think when the bomb went off in the Centennial Olympic Park in Atlanta, that park literally became our national common ground, a symbol of our common determination to stand against terrorism, domestic or foreign, and to do everything we can to combat it.

We have followed a three-part strategy consistently. First of all, we have worked with our friends around the world to try to increase international cooperation against terrorists and to isolate the states that support terrorism. Just today in Paris, the G-7 conference on terrorism is opening, and I believe after this meeting the Attorney General is going to Paris to represent the United States there.

We have intensified our antiterrorism efforts here at home. And I want to again thank the congressional leadership and the Members of Congress from both parties that strongly supported the antiterrorism bill and other efforts that we have made to strengthen our hand here at home. And we've had some results, preventing terrorism actions, catching people who commit terrorist acts. We intend to do more.

The third thing we have done is to increase airport security. And we will be looking at

what else we can do through the commission that I've asked the Vice President to head to intensify airport security in the weeks and months ahead.

Again, let me say, if you look around this room—the Speaker, Senator Lott, Senator Daschle, Mr. Gephardt, Senators Hatch and Biden, Congressman Hyde and Congressman Conyers, the Secretary of State, the Attorney General, the representatives of our law enforcement and intelligence agencies—you can see that when we are attacked, whether it's from within or without, we come together. And that's what we're doing here.

I hope we'll be able to discuss some specific things that we might be able to do to strengthen our hand against terrorism, some things that we proposed before, maybe some other new ideas people have, including some very specific and limited use of wiretaps, perhaps discussion of the taggants issue again and some other issues that will come before us. The main thing is we need to get the very best ideas we can, and we need to move as quickly as we can to do everything we can to try to strengthen this country's hand against terrorism.

And the Speaker made a point the other day which I think is very important, which is that the people who do this thing are always trying to stay ahead of the curve. Whatever we do, they'll try to find some other way to get around it. That means that this has got to be a long, disciplined, concerted, united effort by the United States. And I think we ought to take every tool we can and take every possible advantage we can because this is not going to be easy. But we have shown that we can get results when we work together and do the right thing and the smart thing.

So I'm glad that the leaders are here. I'm looking forward to the conversation. And I'd like to give the Speaker a chance to say a word and Senator Lott and perhaps the minority leaders.

[At this point, Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich, Senate majority leader Trent Lott, House minority leader Richard A. Gephardt, and Senate minority leader Thomas A. Daschle made brief remarks.]